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TRANSACTIONS OF THE SOCIETY.

JANUARY—MARCH, 1897.

The Annual Meeting of the Society was held at Chickering Hall, Tuesday, January 12, 1897, at 8.15 o'clock P. M.

President Daly in the chair.

The following persons, recommended by the Council, were elected Fellows of the Society:

Prof. J. M. Jameson.

Thos. J. Long.

The Annual Report of the Council was then presented and read:

To the American Geographical Society:

The Council respectfully submits the following Report for the year 1896:

The number of Fellows on the 1st of January was 1,149. In all 23 Fellows were elected during the year. The diminution in number by death, resignation, etc., is 103, and the total membership on the 31st of December was 1,069, of whom 284 were Life Fellows.

The Council has again the pleasure of congratulating the Society on the satisfactory condition of its finances. The Treasurer's Report shows that the income of the Society was \$16,797.39, and the ordinary expenditures were \$11,008.91, leaving a surplus of \$5,788.48, of which \$4,000.00 have been added to the Building Fund and invested, as are the other surplus funds of the Society, in bonds secured by mortgages on property in New York, Brooklyn and vicinity, guaranteed by Trust Companies in whose solvency the Council has full confidence.

In the matter of providing a fire-proof building for the collections of the Society, the Council is unable to report progress.

After mature consideration the design for the Cullum Geographical Medal, submitted by Miss Lydia Field Emmet, was adopted, and the sinking of the die has been entrusted to Mr. Victor D. Brenner. The Council, on the 5th of December, 1896, by unanimous vote awarded the first impression of this medal to Civil Engineer R. E. Peary, U. S. N., for his expedition of the year 1892, which determined the insularity of Greenland.

The additions to the Library number 3,544, viz.: Books, 723; Pamphlets and Periodicals, 2,596; Atlases, 14; Maps and Charts, 211.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

(Signed)

HENRY PARISH,

NEW YORK, Jan'y 2, 1897.

Chairman.

The Report of the Treasurer was then presented and read:

REPORT OF THE TREASURER FOR THE YEAR 1896.

NEW YORK, January 1, 1897.

To the American Geographical Society:

The Treasurer respectfully reports the following Receipts and Expenditures of the Society for the year ending December 31, 1896:

The balance in the Union Trust Co., January 1, 1896,		
was.....	\$14,069 49	
The Receipts have been :		
Dues.....	\$7,620 00	
Interest.....	9,001 39	
Sale of Publications	176 00	
	<u>16,797 39</u>	\$30,866 88
The Expenditures have been :		
House Account.....	\$497 24	
Salaries	5,169 00	
Library	1,293 95	
Lectures	728 50	
Publications	2,217 06	
Stationery and Postages.....	411 76	
Insurance	228 00	
Legal Expenses.....	420 00	
Miscellaneous.....	43 40	
	<u>\$11,008 91</u>	
Paid for guaranteed mortgages on property		
in New York, Brooklyn and vicinity	<u>17,200 00</u>	28,208 91
		<u>\$2,657 97</u>
There has also been received—		
Interest on Cullum Medal Fund.....	\$203 12	
and expended on same account.....	<u>100 00</u>	103 12
There remains on deposit in Union Trust		
Co., January 1, 1897.....		<u>\$2,761 09</u>
of which \$629.19 belongs to the Cullum		
Geographical Medal Fund.		

(Signed) WALTER R. T. JONES,
Treasurer.

The Committee charged with the duty of selecting candidates for the offices to be filled made the following Report:

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE.

To the American Geographical Society :

The Committee appointed by the Council on the 5th of December, 1896, to nominate suitable persons to fill the offices which will become vacant in January, 1897, respectfully recommend the election of the following gentlemen :

For President—CHAS. P. DALY, LL.D., term to expire January, 1898.

For Vice-President—W. H. H. MOORE, term to expire January, 1900.

For Treasurer—WALTER R. T. JONES, term to expire January, 1898.

For Foreign Corresponding Secretary—WILLIAM LIBBEY, term to expire January, 1900.

For Councillors—FRANCIS H. BACON, AUSTEN G. FOX, ALEXIS A. JULIEN, S. NICHOLSON KANE, D. O. MILLS ; terms to expire January, 1900.

(Signed) CHARLES A. PEABODY, *Chairman*,
HENRY HOLT,
CHANDLER ROBBINS,

NEW YORK, January 2, 1897.

Nominating Committee.

On motion, duly seconded, Mr. Clinton Roosevelt was authorized to cast the vote of the Society for the candidates and they were declared duly elected.

The President then introduced Civil Engineer R. E. Peary, U. S. N., and addressed him as follows:

LT. PEARY: Our late Vice-President, General Cullum, in addition to his munificent bequest to the Society of \$100,000 towards the erection of a fire-proof building for the security of our fine geographical library of 27,000 volumes, left by his will a further sum to found in the Society a gold medal to be called "*The Cullum Geographical Medal*," for the awarding by the Society, from time to time, of a gold medal to those "who distinguish themselves by geographical discoveries, or in the advancement of geographical science, *particularly citizens of the United States*," and the proceeds of the fund invested for the purpose having reached a sum sufficient to make the first award of the gold medal, the Council, at its meeting last December, passed a resolution unanimously that the first gold medal issued by the Society should be awarded to you for your geographical discoveries in the Arctic, namely:

1. The delineation of the unknown coast of Inglefield Gulf;
2. The delineation of the imperfectly known coasts of Whale and Murchison Sounds;
3. The determination of the rapid convergence of the northern shores of Greenland above the 78th parallel; which established the insularity of Greenland. From Independence Bay to Cape Bismarck, a stretch of about 100 miles, you could not then explore, owing to difficulties which no human effort could overcome.

The outline of the northern coast of Greenland, as it now appears upon the map, is the result of your enterprise.

This, in the history of Arctic exploration, is no ordinary achievement. Dr. Petermann, the founder, proprietor and editor of the great German geographical journal that bears his name, maintained for years, and to the day of his death, that Greenland was a large continent extending over and beyond the pole. I never believed in that theory, as you know, having conversed with you on the subject before you ever went to Greenland, for the reason that three-fourths of the polar circle as then known was an archipelago of islands and if, in the absence of knowledge, we were to indulge in conjecture it was more reasonable to suppose that the remaining fourth would prove to be the same; and this, by the three discoveries that I have enumerated, and especially that of the *rapid convergence* of the northern shores of Greenland, you have established to be the fact.

The Council have signified their appreciation of the importance of this geographical discovery by their unanimous vote that the first gold medal of the Society shall be awarded to you. Our librarian, in communicating to you officially the unanimous conclusion of the Council, took occasion, you will remember, to express his opinion that of all persons now living you were the one most entitled to our gold medal with one exception, and that exception was—Mrs. Peary.

Some one may say, Well, if this has been ascertained, what is the use of it? The answer to which is that it is important that every part of the globe that is unknown should become known if it is possible without considering in advance what the knowledge may lead to. But a better answer is that familiar one of Franklin's to the same question: He replied: "What is the use of a child? make it of use."

The distinction you have acquired will remain a lasting possession to you and to yours, and the lines addressed to La Pérouse may not less fitly be applied to you :

Fair Science on the ocean's azure robe,
Still writes his name in picturing the globe.

Judge Daly then presented the medal to Mr. Peary, who made his acknowledgment in the following address :

Mr. President :

There is a long hiatus between this and the college trophies which I won in the boat race, at throwing the ball, and in walking, and I never dreamed that my ability to get over the ground would in the future win such a magnificent prize as this, the first gold medal of the most conservative Geographical Society of the world. I remember now, in looking at this yellow disk, that when a boy I read a little book containing cuts and descriptions of the various medals awarded my predecessor, Dr. Kane, of the United States Navy, and yet I never thought of anything of the kind in connection with my own work. What I have done has been done for the pure love of doing, and so the award of this medal, coming unsought, unexpected, and best of all, by the unanimous vote of the Council, is ten-fold pleasing. One of man's God-given attributes is the desire to know more, and thousands of eager minds and bodies are constantly at work widening our horizon. Fortunately for us, too, tastes differ here as elsewhere, and each line of investigation has its devotees. There is the astronomer, with his telescope, and his mathematics, reaching out into infinite space ; Le Verrier, projecting his mind into space, noting the perturbations of the planets, grasping the meaning, determining the cause, then saying to astronomers : Point your powerful telescope to such a place in the heavens and you will see a new planet. There is the physical investigator with his countless experiments, his delicate apparatus ; Roentgen with wizard skill discovering at last a way to look through opaque objects. I have the greatest admiration, amounting practically to awe, for these men, but there is only one man in a century capable of such achievements, and in contemplating his almost supernatural work one is troubled with a chill, disagreeable fear that, perhaps after all, the coming man may be simply a toothless, baldheaded case for abnormally developed gray matter ; taking his food in the shape of pellets, and perhaps taking his pleasures and propagating his species in the same way ; and the longing comes over us to remain young and retain the pure animal life of primal man as long as possible.

But to the man of ordinary intellectual calibre and good physique, possessing something of primal man's love of freedom and contact with nature, there is another field of discovery open—that of the explorer. What better than dowered with good blood, strong lungs and strong muscles, as the explorer must be, with every breath a pleasure and every step a source, Antæus-like, of new strength to find and traverse new lands, to add to our knowledge of the world we live in, and obtain information of value to mankind ? There is a constant intoxication in such work, in the thought "my eyes are the first that have ever looked upon this scene, mine the touch that has wakened the sleeping princess." Every one of you who is, or has been a mountain climber, knows this feeling. Everywhere, whether in the tropics, the temperate zone or the Arctic circle, this feeling holds possession of the traveller, and yet it seems to me as if the purely personal effect is stronger in the north than anywhere else. The mid-night sun, the noonday night, equally unapproachable in sublimity ; the dazzling brilliance, the universal darkness, the inky sea, the snowy land, the mighty bones of mother earth beneath the feet, the infinite heaven, unbroken, uninterrupted above the head ; the crystalline air, biting, it is true, but pure as the celestial ether ; the infinite

silence, the indescribable desolation, touch and keep in vibrant unison the highest, grandest, noblest, purest chords in human nature. Mr. President, you and the members of the American Geographical Society have been my firm, consistent friends from the day when I presented to you my first project for Greenland exploration, and you endorsed it and gave tangible proof that you meant the endorsement.

My work has determined what Sir Clements Markham, president of the Royal Geographical Society, characterized as one of the oldest and most interesting Arctic problems, the insularity of Greenland, and I am more than glad that it has substantiated the views you have always held that the land of the inner polar circle must be in the form of detached islands, groups, rather than a great Arctic continent, as was urged by the great German geographer, Petermann.

Mr. President and members of the Geographical Society, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for this high honour.

There will be in the future many contestants who will strive for the prize, and win glory for themselves and the Society. And the name of the Society, linked with that of its revered Vice-President, Gen. Cullum, will be more and more widely known, and in the families and among the descendants and friends of the fortunate recipients of the medal shall be household words for generations to come.

And now, Mr. President and members of the Society, as this seems a particularly fitting and appropriate time to speak of the future, I beg your indulgent attention for a few minutes.

History has been made rapidly in the Arctic regions in the past few years and is apt to be made still faster in the next few. My own reconnoissance of the Greenland Inland Ice in 1886 was followed by Nansen's crossing of the country in 1888. Then came my two expeditions of 1891 to 1895, in each of which I crossed the northern portion of the Great Ice Cap from Whale Sound to Independence Bay and the northern terminus of main Greenland; reaching an unknown portion of the east coast and settling the question of the insularity of the Great Arctic Island. Simultaneously with my second expedition started the expeditions of Wellman to the Spitzbergen region, Jackson to Franz Josef Land, and Nansen into the great blank of the Siberian Arctic basin.

Now, all of these expeditions but one have returned, leaving untouched or unfinished several of the most interesting problems of the North.

Nansen has wrested from the Stars and Stripes the record of highest north which it had held for a dozen years and placed the Norwegian flag far in advance. He has also shown that the entire segment of the polar basin north of the Siberian coast is not available for further poleward efforts. Jackson is still in Franz Josef Land, but with all my admiration for the pluck and energy of this gallant Englishman and the free-handed generosity and public spirit of his patron, Mr. Harmsworth, I fear that conditions are against him, now that it is established that Franz Josef Land is merely an archipelago of limited extent with no land north of it. My own expeditions have satisfied me that from a sufficient depot of provisions and equipment located in the latitude of Independence Bay the Pole is attainable. The results of these various expeditions have shown that there is left but one practicable route by which to attain the North Pole, and that route the one that has been known as the American, viz., the route through Smith Sound, Kane Basin, Robeson Channel, and along the north-west coast of Greenland. This route has been developed almost exclusively by Americans—Kane, Hayes, Hall and Greely. The Pole is certain to be reached soon; it is only a question of time and money and not so very much of the latter; and unless we are alert we shall be left in the rear. I propose for your consideration now in

the simplest and fewest possible words a safe, common-sense project for reaching the Pole by the only remaining practicable route. I have no theory to advance (the polar regions are peculiarly hostile to theories); therefore, I have no long array of arguments to marshal. I have to present simply a plain statement of facts. The conquest of the North Pole, the complete delimitation of the Greenland Archipelago, the last of the circumpolar island groups, and the elimination from our maps of the unknown area between the 84th parallel and the Pole, are important geographical desiderata. This work can be accomplished without risk of life or health. It can be done at a comparatively small cost. The time for this work is favorable; the probabilities of success flattering; the requisite experience and inclination to undertake it available. The one element lacking is the necessary funds. My plan in fewest words is to raise a fund sufficient to insure the continuation of the work of exploration for ten years, if necessary, say \$150,000, and deposit it in a trust company; purchase a ship; give her a minimum crew; load with concentrated provisions; proceed to Whale Sound; take on board several picked families of my faithful Eskimos, with their tents, canoes, dogs, etc.; force a way through Robeson Channel to Sherard Osborn Fjord or farther, and land people and stores; then send the ship back. As soon as the freezing of the ice in the great fjords of the northwest coast would permit sledge travel, the work of advancing supplies northeastward along the coast would be commenced, taking comparatively short stages and light loads so that the trips could be quickly made. As soon as the supplies had been advanced the first stage, the party itself would move forward, leaving a cache behind, and as they would be following Eskimo customs and living in snow houses, this could easily be done. Then the second stage of advance would be taken up, and the work carried on until the departure of the sun. Each of the brilliant winter moons of the polar night would afford opportunities for continuing it, so that early spring should find the party and the bulk of its supplies located at the northern terminus of the North Greenland Archipelago, probably not far from the 85th parallel, with caches behind it at each prominent headland. From this point, when the proper time came, with picked dogs, the lightest possible equipment, and two of the best of the Eskimos, the dash for the Pole would be attempted with strong probabilities of a successful termination. Should the first season be unfavorable as regards ice conditions, it could be devoted to a detailed survey of the archipelago itself and a reconnoissance of the east coast as far south as possible, and the northern journey reserved for the following season, or the next. Each succeeding summer the ship would attempt to establish communication with the party's base, succeeding probably every other year at first, then, with increasing experience, every year, and keep up its supply of food, dogs and Eskimos until the objects of the expedition were accomplished. Should the ship be unsuccessful in the passage of Robeson Channel the first year, the party would land at Hayes Sound, and devote the first year to explorations of that unknown region. Retreat from the colony at Sherard Osborn Fjord would always be practicable across the inland ice to Whale Sound.

Here let me call your attention to a few points on which you must accept my dictum, as I have no time to enlarge.

Arctic exploration may be regarded as safe. This is shown by the experience of the last ten years. Nothing is to be gained by numbers; in fact, numbers are a distinct danger, and the frightful catastrophes of previous work are, in my opinion, directly traceable to that cause. The entire animus of the Arctic regions is against large parties. Where three men will get along in safety and comfort, six would merely exist on half-rations and twelve die of starvation. The two-man party is the ideal one; both Nansen and myself have proved this.

The leader of the expedition must be at the head of the advance party; no successful Arctic party can be led from the rear.

The latitude of Lockwood and Brainard's farthest north is 83 degrees 24 minutes. The distance from this point, up to which we know there is land, to the Pole and return, is less than the distance from Whale Sound to Independence Bay and return, which I have twice covered, once with a single companion, and again under the heaviest handicap.

Quite likely the question comes up: "If this method is so practicable, why has not the establishment of a base in this locality been attempted before? and why have I not attempted it myself?" It has been attempted before, but there being no means for a continued effort, failure in the first attempt has resulted in its abandonment. As for myself, it has been entirely a question of money. The funds at my disposal have not permitted the charter of a ship beyond Whale Sound.

The points in favor of this project are:

1. The utilization of the Eskimo, the people best fitted in the world for that particular kind of work, men who, under the leadership of one whom they know to be their friend, and in whom they have the utmost confidence, would follow to the end, faithful and loyal as their own magnificent dogs. What could be more effective, more practical, than a party, its rank and file made up of the children of the North Pole itself, a surgeon for emergencies, and a leader to furnish will, intelligence and direction? According to the theory of Sir Clements Markham, President of the Royal Geographical Society, the forefathers of these people, centuries ago, during the migration of the tribe from Siberia to its present home, may have crossed unknowingly the apex of the earth. What a striking coincidence if their children should be the instruments of wresting the secret of the Pole!

2. Land for a base. The party launched into the icy waste from the Northern Archipelago, would have some definite, fixed point to which to return, rather than a ship drifting with the drifting ice, to vanish like a will o' the wisp, as did the *Fram* from Nansen. Then should the party be swept westerly in its retreat, it would still strike land, and finding depots at each prominent headland, could easily reach headquarters.

3. A practicable and already utilized route for a retreat independent of the ship or outside assistance.

In a nutshell my project means:

First: The raising of a sum sufficient to insure persistent, continued effort so that if the attempt fails the first year it can be repeated the next, and the next, and the next until it is done.

Second: The establishment of a party of picked Eskimo families, a surgeon and an experienced leader at the highest practicable point on the northwest coast of Greenland; with ample supplies; means of communication, which would enable the colony to sustain itself until its work is accomplished, and with a practicable line of retreat entirely independent of the ship.

This project in more detail and accompanied by maps will be placed before your Council in the belief that it will meet the approval and endorsement of the Society. With that endorsement, I believe the time is opportune for raising the money for the work. There is not a man or woman here to-night whose heart would not thrill with patriotism to see the realization of this project and know that it was American money, intelligence, energy and endurance that had scaled the apex of the earth and lighted it with the American flag. And no man could (simply by the expenditure of a few thousands, à la Henry Grinnell or Baron Dickson or Mr. Harmsworth, without exer-

tion or personal discomfort) obtain a more royal and imperishable monument than to have his name written forever across the mysterious rocks and ice which form the setting for the spinning axis of the globe—the North Pole.

The Cullum Geographical Medal is the work of Miss Lydia Field Emmet. On the obverse is the figure of a young man standing in the bow of a boat. He has thrown down his oars upon discovering land. He shades his eyes with his hand as the boat progresses through the waves. A sea gull, hovering, indicates the proximity of land. The whole is supposed to represent enterprise and the spirit of exploration. Inscribed on the face of the medal is: "The American Geographical Society of New York."

The reverse, to typify achievement and award, bears a female figure—Columbia, the left hand resting on a globe and the right holding out a laurel wreath. Beneath the right arm is a tablet to bear the record of the achievement for which the award is made. On this side is the inscription, "The Cullum Geographical Medal."

The President then introduced the speaker of the evening, Mr. F. S. Dellenbaugh, who read a paper on Coronado's March from Mexico to the Missouri, 1540-1542.

On motion, the Society adjourned.

A Regular Meeting of the Society was held at Chickering Hall on Monday, February 8, 1897, at 8.30 o'clock P.M.

Vice-President Tiffany in the chair.

The following persons, duly recommended, were elected Fellows of the Society:

Wm. Agnew Paton, Dr. Leander,
 J. Chamberlain.

The Chairman then introduced Mr. F. H. Newell, of the U. S. Geological Survey, who read a paper on Irrigation and its Effects upon Geography: the author of the paper, Mr. H. M. Wilson, being confined to his room in Washington by a serious illness.

On motion, the Society adjourned.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE APPOINTED FEBRUARY 6TH, 1897, TO CONSIDER AND
REPORT UPON A SCHEME FOR POLAR EXPLORATION SUBMITTED BY R. E.
PEARY, U. S. N.

To the Council of the American Geographical Society.

GENTLEMEN:

Your Committee, having examined and considered Mr. R. E. Peary's project of polar exploration, respectfully report that they find it clearly stated and well reasoned, and in their judgment, (so far as men not personally familiar with the con-

ditions of Arctic life can be supposed to form a judgment), practicable and worthy of support.

In itself and keeping in view the objects sought to be attained—the added distinction to be won for America, and the increase of knowledge among men—and the chances of success, the attempt is one that ought to be made.

Considering Mr. Peary's rare experience and his remarkable qualifications of energy, prudence, tenacity and fitness for command, it must be regarded as a singular advantage for his country that he stands ready to undertake the task for which his natural gifts and his acquirements have fitted him beyond other men.

Your Committee submit, and recommend for adoption the following resolution :

Resolved, that the Council of the American Geographical Society heartily approves the project of polar exploration laid before it by Civil Engineer R. E. Peary, U. S. N., and will gladly contribute towards the expense of the same, provided such contribution is needed and will be acceptable, and that other subscriptions, sufficient to warrant the undertaking, are secured by Mr. Peary.

Respectfully submitted,

BANCROFT GHERARDI,	} <i>Committee.</i>
CHARLES P. DALY,	
CHANDLER ROBBINS,	

NEW YORK, February 20, 1897.

A Regular Meeting of the Society was held at Chickering Hall on Monday, March 8, 1897, at 8.30 o'clock P.M.

President Daly in the chair.

The following persons, recommended by the Council, were elected Fellows of the Society:

Chas. B. Gunther,	James McKeon,
W. C. Van Antwerp.	

The President then introduced Mr. William Niven, who described his exploration of the ruined city of Omitlán, in the State of Guerrero, Mexico, and threw on the screen a number of illustrations taken on the spot.

On motion, the Society adjourned.

OBITUARY.

James Mühlenberg Bailey, a Life Fellow of the Society since the year 1869, and since 1870 a member of the Council, died at his home in New York on the 27th of February, 1897. He was Foreign Corresponding Secretary from 1873 to 1876, and from the latter year until his death he held the office of Domestic Corresponding Secretary. His interest in the work of the Society was active, until the failure of his health in recent years.

Mr. Bailey inherited a fortune, which enabled him to gratify his cultivated tastes. He travelled extensively in Europe, and his collection of rare engravings was well known among art lovers.